

REVIEW ARTICLE

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Issues: From apartheid to CIA recruiting

It's not the '60s all over, but students have causes other than good grades

By Denise Kalette
USA TODAY

KENT, Ohio — Here at Kent State University, where four students were killed during a turbulent demonstration 15 years ago, a new campus activism is stirring.

Monday, anti-nuclear protesters marched to the ROTC office waving banners and urging a stop to military recruiting.

Friday, students will stand vigil through the night on the spots where the four died May 4, 1970, after National Guardsmen fired into a crowd of protesting students.

Today, youthful passions are being kindled on campuses from Boulder, Colo., to Lexington, Ky., on issues from apartheid to Central America to CIA recruiting.

These are not the massive protests of the '60s and '70s. They involve hundreds — sometimes fewer — on campuses of many thousands. The new activism is competing against this generation's striving for career success and financial reward.

Today, the CIA, once a target of collegiate wrath, recruits on 100 campuses a year. ROTC is back at Kent and 314

other campuses, with an enrollment of 99,637. Now they are becoming targets once again.

Though students are chaining themselves to administration buildings and staging sleep-ins once again, they avoid the destruction that left buildings burned.

Alan Canfora, now 36, was one of nine students wounded at Kent State. Now, he lives 18 miles from campus, studies student protest and speaks at universities about the shootings.

Canfora calls the widely reported conservatism of today's students "illusory. If there is a resumption of the draft or an invasion of Central America, inevitably there will be a powerful new student movement" of the kind that shut down 500 campuses and involved 5 million people during the late '60s.

■ At the University of Colorado in Boulder, 478 people were arrested April 9, 10 and 11, when 500 students attempted "citizen's arrests" of CIA recruiters on campus. Other CIA demonstrations have taken place this spring at the University of Iowa in Iowa City and at Yale in New Haven, Conn.

■ At New York's Columbia University, for three weeks beginning April 4, anti-apartheid demonstrators blockaded the same administration building occupied during a 1968 uprising. Protesters wanted the school to divest itself of any interest — usually stocks and bonds — in firms that do business with South Africa. Other schools with divestiture protests were Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and the University of California at Berkeley.

■ On April 17, 100 students gathered at the University of Kentucky in Lexington to protest a State Department delay that prevented a Nicaraguan speaker from coming to campus. Earlier that week, there were two demonstrations against U.S. policy in Nicaragua.

According to the current edition of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*: "The (anti-apartheid) demonstrations, sit-ins and boycotts were the latest events in a two-week campaign that has snowballed into the biggest surge of campus unrest since the 1970s."

Universally, campus activists and administrators want to avoid "another Kent State."

Sophomore Lisa Sanders, 19, was only 4 when the 13-second rifle volley felled Allison Krause, Jeff Miller, Sandy Scheuer and Bill Schroeder. Now she volunteers at the May 4 Task Force office, which keeps alive their memory.

The task force is organizing a speakers' program for Saturday, when an anticipated 1,000 will be drawn here to remember Kent State.

On a grassy knoll near Prentice Hall where 20 women sunbathe, Sanders walks the fatal route: "The guards were here. Students were throwing rocks. Guards threw rocks. Tear gas was fired. The guards knelt. People started running away. Twelve members of the troop turned and shot."

It's no coincidence that the most violent and vocal protests of that period occurred on campuses.

"Students really are the conscience of this country. Protests are what forced people like Richard Nixon to finally end the Vietnam War," says Jill Hanauer, 24, president of the University of Colorado's 22,000 students.

While campus scenes are reminiscent of the volatile Vietnam years, leaders such as Hanauer try to profit from mistakes of the '60s.

"We went to the campus police and had a number of meetings with them. We told them we were planning to perform a citizen's arrest (of CIA recruiters)."

Before the protests, activists ran training sessions on civil disobedience. They expected 50 demonstrators on April 9. By 9 a.m., 500 students had gathered.

"We had activists. We had people from sororities, fraternities, resident advisers. There were 35 junior high and high school students who got permission from their parents to miss school, and they got arrested," Hanauer says.

Campus police used plastic handcuffs and, when they ran out, wrote arrest numbers with

Magic Markers on students' hands. The police also distributed buttons saying "Arrested for Peace" as a good-will gesture before dropping charges.

John Towle, 59, police chief at the University of Colorado, says both sides tried hard to make the arrests non-confrontational.

"A lot of pre-planning went into this. People didn't just meet on the field of battle for the first time. You build a rapport. It's hard to make an enemy of someone you've sat down and talked with."

Hanauer and other young leaders are in daily contact about issues and students' reactions to them. "Yesterday, I spoke to Santa Cruz and Berkeley about South Africa and what they're doing today."

Boulder activists organized an "education week" costing about \$3,500. South African journalist Cumisani Kumalo was flown in, and 2,000 brochures were printed and mailed.

Protest is an old collegiate story. In the 1730s, Harvard students rebelled over food and campus living quarters. Princeton was the Kent State of the early 1800s — known for its activism, says Canfora.

In this century, war has been the focus. Hundreds of thousands took a peace pledge before World War I. In the 1930s, while global antagonism sharpened and Hitler's Brown Shirts mobilized, anti-war protests spread through the USA's campuses.

But when Pearl Harbor was bombed, many voices were stilled. Even so, in the second World War, there were 43,000 conscientious objectors — including Kent State professor William Keeney. During the Vietnam War, there were 172,000 objectors.

So far, today's issues are not enough to entice students such as Kent's Eric Harwell, 19.

He is not protesting, though he might if pressed on an issue such as civil rights.

"My spirit is there" with those who carried banners. "But because I'm here to get an education, my education has to take priority. My mother is working hard to put me through school. I don't want to disappoint her by messing up."